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A  
**SERMON**

PREACHED

Before the MAIOR of the City

OF

**NORWICH,**

IN

The Cathedral-Church of the said  
City, on Sunday *January* 31. 167<sup>4</sup><sub>5</sub>.

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BY

**ROBERT CONOLD, M. A.**

And Rector of *Berghapton* in the County of *Norfolk*.

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L O N D O N,

Printed for *George Rose* Book-seller in *Norwich*, and  
are to be sold by him there, and by *Nath. Brook*  
at the Angel in *Cornhill*, 1675.

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SERMON

Before the MAJORITY of the City

NORWICH

The Cathedral-Church of the said  
City, on Sunday January 31. 1677.

BY  
ROBERT COYOLD, M.A.

And Rector of the Church of St. Andrew in the County of Norfolk.

Printed by George Royston in Norwich, and  
sold by him at the Sign of the Gun, in the  
Street called the Gunpowder Street, 1677.

~~any one who is not a member of the Church of England~~  
~~and who is not a member of the Church of England~~  
TO THE  
RIGHT WORSHIPFULL  
*HENRY WATTS, Esq;*  
*Mayor of the City of Norwich.*

SIR,

**T**HIS Sermon is so little a thing, and of so mean Extraction, that it would look like an idle impertinence, to tell the world the History of its Birth, or proclaim the Hand that brought it forth. If any thing can render these Papers considerable, it must be their Design: as being sincerely intended for those great ends of Peace and Holiness. And you being by your Office a Sub-defender of the Faith, I hope you will accept this Dedication, and become a Patron to such Religious Purposes; Indeed I wish, that the

Magistrate and Minister were alwayes  
bound up together, not onely in the  
Formalities of Sermons, and Dedications,  
but by a mutual assistance, and an active  
Compliance; and were but the Bench and the  
Pulpit thus combin'd, there were yet hope to  
see this Nation secur'd from the Mischiefs of  
unreasonable and wicked Men; which is the  
onely design of this Sermon, and the hearty  
Prayer of

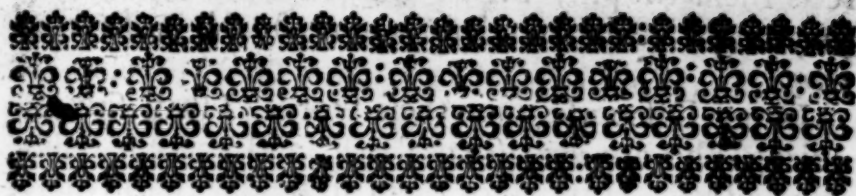
*Your obliged Servant,*

ROBERT CONOLD.

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A  
S E R M O N  
PREACHED

Before the M A I O R of the City  
of NORWICH, &c.

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II. THESS. chap. III. v. 2.

*And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and  
wicked Men.*

**T**HE great business of the Apostles was to propagate the Religion of Jesus, and therefore St. Paul enjoyns the Church of *Theſſalonica*, and other Churches in the rest of his Epistles, to pray for him, and for the whole Colledge of the Apostles, that their Ministry might be successfull, that the Word of God, or the Religion of Jesus, might have free course and be glorious in the World, *vers. 1.* And seeing nothing more hindred the advancement of Christs Kingdom, than the Oppositions and Contradictions of absurd, perverse, and ill-temper'd men, therefore he directs

rects them to pray in the words of the Text, that they might be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men.

In my Discourse upon these words, I shall first enquire, Who are *unreasonable men*, and therein respectively shew, How all of them do hinder the advance of Religion, and then make some practical Reflections :

I.

First, I shall consider the words according to the vulgar Latine, *Ut liberemur ab hominibus importunis*; That we may be delivered from men of turbulent and tempestuous spirits, from men who are all Rage and Passion, and Nothing of sober Reason; Truth it self may suffer by the unreasonable heats of some of its Defenders; for the World will never believe, that God can be in the Earthquake or the Tempest: Had those two Sons of Thunder, *Luke 9. 45.* brought fire from Heaven, and destroyed that *Samaritane* Village for a little affront to Jesus, they had done a vast mischief to his Religion; For the Blood of Men, and the Ashes of Towns, had been an ill Foundation for the Kingdom of Christ, and would have possessed men with a vehement prejudice against Christianity, as a cruel and bloody Religion; But when men of this troublesome and passionate temper happen to be mistaken, and engaged against the Truth, then there is nothing so absurd and unreasonable as a blind and mistaken Zealot; for Zeal is the hottest Passion of Man, and when it is not govern'd by the rules of Reason, Truth and Sobriety, it turns men into Furies. *St. Paul* bears record of the *Jews*, *Rom. 10. 2.* that they had a Zeal, and it was so far right, that it was not for *Moloch*, nor *Ashtaroath*, but for God; but yet it was blind and mistaken, and not according unto Knowledge, and therefore we see the Tragick Events of it; they tumult  
and

• and uproar in *Jerusalem*, and cry Justice against him  
 • that was born King of the *Jews*, and nothing could  
 quench that flame, but the Blood of the Son of God;  
 I shall not need to repeat the stories of the Massacres  
 of *Munster* and *Paris*, acted by Anabaptistical and Po-  
 pish Zealots; as long as the Thirtieth of *January* stands  
 in our Kalender, we shall have reason to pray, that we  
 may be delivered from this sort of unreasonable and  
 wicked Men.

Secondly, I shall read the words according to the 2.  
*Syriack Version*, *That we may be delivered from per-*  
*verse and obstinate men, from men that will not be go-*  
*verned by the wisest Laws, nor convinc'd by the clearest*  
*Reasons*: How did our Saviour baffle the *Pharisees*, put S. Mat. 22.  
 them to silence, that they durst not ask any more  
 questions, and yet He who was the *Logos*, the Eter-  
 nal Reason and Wisdom of the Father, He that  
 opened the eyes of the Blind, cast out Devils, and  
 rais'd the Dead, could not convince that perverse Ge-  
 neration of men; the like success had his Apostles, for  
 when St. *Peter* wrought a Miracle in the Name of Je- Acts 3.  
 sus, in a publick place, in a concourse of the *Jews*,  
 cur'd him in a Moment, whom the *Jews* knew had  
 been lame many years, though there was so much de-  
 monstration in the Fact, as the Council confess'd that Ch. 4. 16.  
 a notable Miracle was done, and it was known to  
 all them that dwelt in *Jerusalem*, and they could not  
 deny it, yet that Power that could heal the Cripple,  
 could not cure perverseness, for they continued to  
 oppose that Religion, which themselves confessed  
 was sealed by the very hand of God: To give but  
 one instance more of this unreasonable obstinacy, and  
 that which perhaps might occasion the injunction of  
 the Text; St. *Paul* was at *Thessalonica*, Acts 17. preach-  
 ing

ing the everlasting Gospel, there he reasoned with the *Jews*, and that too *καὶ τῶν ἑαυτῶν*, out of their own confess'd Scriptures of *Moses* and the Prophets. Indeed 'tis said *ver. 11.* that the *εὐαγγελισταί*, those of the more ingenuous and rational Temper calmly listened to *St. Pauls* Discourses, and became Profelytes to the Religion of Jesus; But the unreasonable and obstinate *Jews*, instead of being perswaded by *St. Pauls* Demonstrations, stirred up the rabble of the Town, put the whole City into an uproar, and would have murdered him, whose reasons they could never answer: Therefore pray that we may be delivered from this sort of perverse or unreasonable men: For Christianity is a Rational Religion, and must be impressed upon men by sober Councils, and Perswasions of Reason; but if men will obstinately persist in their mistakes and prejudices, if they will never learn *St. Pauls* Lesson *ἑσθύνειν εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν*, to be wise unto Sobriety; if every unlearned Man and silly Woman will think themselves more knowing than the holiest and wisest Guides of the Church, we may preach with the Tongue of Men and Angels, but never perswade them to the wisdom of the Just, or to mind those things that make for Peace or Truth.

3. Thirdly, I shall read the words according to the Greek, *ἵνα ῥυθώμεν ἀπὸ τῶν ἀτόπων*, that we may be delivered from absurd and irrational men, and under this head several sorts of persons are comprehended. First, The Heretick and false Prophet, men that teach such things as contradict the Fundamental Reasons of Religion, and are inconsistent with the words of Truth and soberness; The loose Opinions of the *Gnosticks*, the Phanatick Doctrines of the *Manichees*, and wild Extravagancies of the *Valentinians*, gave a greater blow



• blow to Christianity, than the Ten Persecutions: And  
 • in our present Age, the absurd Doctrines of the Church  
 of *Rome*, and sects of *Christendome*, is one great Reason  
 why the Religion of Jesus prevails no more in the  
 world; for how can we think to perswade a con-  
 sidering Jew or *Mahometan* to come over to that Re-  
 ligion, which maintains direct Contradictions to the  
 common sense and Reason of Mankind, and vents such  
 idle Dreams and Absurdities, as out-doe the *Jewish*  
*Talmud* or the *Turkish Alcoran*? Secondly, such as  
 without just Reason do cause Dissensions in the Church  
 of Christ; not that every one that dissents from the  
 Doctrine of this or that Church, is therefore a schis-  
 matick or unreasonable; if a Dissenter be meek and  
 modest, humble and holy, and makes no breach in  
 the Churches Unity; such an one hath the temper  
 of a sober Christian, and can do no mischief to Re-  
 ligion; but when dissenting in matters of Opinion is  
 attended with Pride and Passion, Rage and Malice,  
 and tends to the Subversion of Government and good  
 Order, then 'tis manifest, that there's something more  
 in the case than Conscience, and the man is become  
 unreasonable; When a weak scruple against the Sign  
 of the Cross, shall make men Rebels against the Crown,  
 when a superstitious abhorrence of a white Vestment,  
 shall bring us to Garments roll'd in blood, when a  
 mad Zeal against an Organ or Church-Musick, shall  
 make men call for the confused Noise of the Warriour,  
 and the Thundrings of Drums and Cannons; 'tis then  
 evident these men have lost the temper of Christians,  
 and the Reason of sober men, and wear upon their  
 Foreheads that brand in the Text, of *unreasonable men*;  
 Nor is it alwayes unreasonable to make a separation  
 from a particular Church; this is the case betwixt us



and *Rome*; there are in that Church so many absurdities, and Antichristian Blasphemies, that tend to the dishonour of the whole Trinity, and the subversion of pure Christianity, that we could neither be sober Christians, nor rational men, to continue in the Doctrine and Communion of that Church: But when the Church of *England* made a Separation from the Church of *Rome*; it made no Schisme from the Catholick Church, but kept the ancient Boundaries and Foundations of Faith, Worship, and Government; And therefore it will yet be a question, whether those who are born within the Jurisdiction of this National Church, established by the Law of a lawfull and Christian Prince, and yet continue a separation from it, whether these may not deservedly be counted *unreasonable men*; Now thus much is manifest, that the Bond of Peace is a sacred Tye, that to obey our Governours is a plain Christian Law, and therefore if men dissolve this Unity, and disobey them who are set over them, they had need be secure of such a weighty Reason as they may adventure to plead at the Day of Judgement; But I am afraid, that all those scruples, that have hitherto been urged to vindicate a Separation from our Communion, will be found too light at that day, to counterpoize the vast Guilts of Schisme and Disobedience; Could these men make it appear that their Salvation were in the least hazard by Communion with us; if they could not have peace with us, but upon those ill terms of parting with Truth and Holiness; Could they demonstrate, that we are in any thing departed from the ancient Catholick Church, they had then unanswerable Reasons to vindicate their Separation; But since it is evident, that this Church hath preserved entire that Faith once deli-

- delivered to the Saints, without any loss or Innovation; since all the Laws and Rules of holy and Christian Life are by this Church urged, and taught; since men may conform to all the Constitutions of this Church, and yet be as Holy as the best of Saints in any Age of the World; since there is nothing herein commanded, that ever God did forbid by the least intimation; since all this we are able to assert by the clearest demonstrations; I dare boldly say, that if there be any such thing in the World as Reason, these are absurd and unreasonable men. Pray therefore that we may be delivered from this sort of perverse and irrational men; for there is nothing more hinders the Advance of Christs Kingdom, than our unreasonable Divisions: *Babel* it self can't prosper, if the Builders be divided; and can we hope that the Church of God should be built up amidst so many Confusions? Time was, the Catholick Church was one entire Body, when the Incestuous Person, who by the Apostles censure was cast out of the Church at *Corinth*, could not have found Admission at the Church in *Antioch*, or *Jerusalem*; and thus it continued for some few Centuries; He who for notorious Scandal was Excommunicated by the Eastern Church, stood so to the West, and could have no Communion with any part of the Catholick Church, before his declared Penitence and Reconciliation: Then the church of Christ looked like one Family and House of God, and Christianity was Glorious; But now our Divisions have almost lost two Articles of our Creed, and render very unaccountable the Catholick Church, and the Communion of saints: For, if a man for some just Offence be Excommunicated by the Church of *England*, he shall be embraced in the Communion of

*Rome*; if he be cast out of that Church, he may be received for a Member of the Church of *Geneva*; if he forfeits his Membership there, he may be united to the *Lutherans* in *Germany*; if he be thrown out thence, let him but cross the Seas, and return to *England*, and he shall be admitted an Elder, or at least a Member of some Congregational Church in this Nation; if that Congregation eject him, a second shall receive him, and from thence a third, fourth, and fifth, through all our Divisions, and Sub-divisions; so that now the Church of Christ is the most confused Body in the World; there are so many distinct Buildings of pretended Churches, that, that solemn Power of the Keyes, which our Lord committed to his Church, is become nothing but an empty Mockery; for no man needs fear the being cast out of one Church, when there are such varieties of Keyes, and so many Churches to receive him in; And what will the end of these things be? there needs no Prophetick spirit to foretell that; for except our unreasonable Divisions be composed, the Effect of them will be, the Subversion of true Religion, and the Advance of Atheism; And how can we think to persuade the crafty Jew, or *Mahometan*, to become a Member of the Church of Christ, when we can't agree among our selves, where that Catholick Church is in which he shall most secure his Salvation? And as for Atheisme, he must be a stranger to his own Countrey, that does not observe the encrease of those Monsters amongst us; We can scarce walk our Streets without encountering some of these Beasts, that wear the Mark of Blasphemy on their Foreheads; And this is most chiefly imputable to our Dissentions; for while one cries, Lo here is Christ, and another cries,

Lo,

- *Loe, he is there*, whilst one with much confidence will
- tell you that heaven lies this way, and another with as much Zeal as he, will avow; it lies direct Antipodes what can we expect, but that some sensual and unprincipled men will believe that Christ is nowhere to be found, and that all Religion is but a cheat;

A third sort of irrational men are, wicked men; which are justly put together in the text, for nothing makes us look more like men, than the being good and vertuous, and nothing so much unmans us, as brutish sensualities, But to be men, and Christians too, and yet to be licentious, is the highest pitch of unreasonableness; for men to profess the purest Religion in the world, and yet to wallow in the mire, for men to confess Christ to be their Lord, and yet pay him no homage, but mock at his Laws, and despise his Government; for men to profess the belief of an eternal life, and yet to live as if they should dye like beasts; are not these things unreasonable absurdities? But for men to adventure to be vicious upon principles of Atheisme, is highly irrational; for though we had never heard of *Moses*, and the Prophets, Christ, or his Apostles, if we had no other revelation of another world, than the common suspicions of men in all Ages, yet to be good and holy were most reasonable; for all the common notions of mankind will secure vertue, and innocency from all future torment or misery; But if there happens to be a future vengeance, there is no coming back to learn more reason, or counsel: The Atheistical debauchee must howl and gnash his teeth, and be angry with himself for ever, for being an unreasonable and wicked man:

Now



Now these too do vast mischiefs to the Kingdom of Christ, and hinder Religion from being glorious; for while the Jew or Mahometan observes, that we Christians rebell against the Government of Jesus, they will conclude that he was not the true prophet, nor the Son of God; for they will suppose, that if we did believe him to be the great Prophet of the world, and Lord of all, that we would be as carefull to observe his commands, as they are to keep the Laws of Moses, and the orders of Mahomet; And how can we think to persuade them to take that yoke upon them, which they see we our selves cast off.

In particular those debauchees, that call themselves members of the Church of England, have helpt to make our Sects and Divisions, and have done us as much mischief as Armies of Rebels, for though we can maintain our selves to be a true Christian Church, yet if our lives be not as Orthodox as our Principles, say what we will, men will believe that our Religion is as bad as our lives.

The last sort of irrational men, that I shall mention, is the Atheist, who in despite of the clearest demonstrations in Divinity, and the common sentiments of the vastest and wisest part of mankind, will yet disbelieve the being of a God, and mock at all Religion; these were strange monsters in Christendom, if our many divisions had not given us a too sad, and easie account of their original; but those who have no faith, the Text tells us have no reason neither; for of all the Records and Writings of past Ages, we have least reason to call into question, the truth or Authority of the holy Scriptures, not onely upon the account of its Prophecies, and diviner mysteries, but as being asserted to us by the blood of thousands of Martyrs,  
attested



• attested by the Learnedest, Wifest, and Holiest part  
 • of mankind, which sure are most secure from delusion;  
 besides, tis irrational to suspect the Scriptures to be a  
 private invention, for it cannot be reconciled to the  
 piety of good men, or blessed Angels, to impose upon  
 the world their private sentiments, and than counter-  
 feit the Seal and Hand of God, and cry thus saith the  
 Lord, when they had no other revelations than the  
 dictates of their own fancy; nor can it with reason be  
 imagined that these Writings should ever be composed  
 by evil Angels, or wicked men, their whole design be-  
 ing to make men like God, and to destroy the Empire  
 of the Devil, and to deterre men from all manner of  
 impieties, And therefore a man must first renounce his  
 reason, before he can become an Atheist, or suspect the  
 sacred Oracles to be impostures. For a man to believe  
 the report of Travellers that there is such a place as  
*Ætna*, a burning mountain, and yet to mock at Christ,  
 when he tells him of everlasting fire, is not this to be  
 absurd and unreasonable? And yet further for a man  
 to believe there is no God, for no other reason, but  
 because he is a man, and therefore by the scant mea-  
 sures of his nature and reason, under an impossibility  
 of comprehending a full notion of an infinite Divinity;  
 For a man, that with all his Philosophy, will be puz-  
 zled with the mechanisme of a silly flye, yet to believe  
 there is no God, because he can't reach the notion of  
 his Eternity, and Immenity; is not this to be irra-  
 tional?

Now this sort of unreasonable men, not onely hin-  
 der the advance of Religion, but undermine its very  
 foundations, and endeavour to pluck down the whole  
 building, and lay it level with the ground, and there-  
 fore if ye have any regard to the glory of God, or  
 the

the honour of Religion, Pray *that we may be delivered . from these unreasonable, and wicked men*, who are the worst sort of Infidels, and have no faith.

*Application.*

First, since there are amongst us so many unreasonable, and wicked men, this will inform us of the necessity of good Laws and Government; Mad men must be kept upon the chain, and it is neither safe, nor prudent to trust franticks with swords, or liberty; shall we keep up our banks against the raging of the Sea, and have no bounds for unreasonable men, *or the madnes of the people?* Surely it will highly concern all Governours of State, and Overseers of the Church, to be very watchful, and not to let loose too far unreasonable men, for that can neither be Pious, nor Politick; for if there be no restraints for such mischievous and Atheistical men, they will in time both shake the Kingdom of Jesus, and the thrones of Christian Princes.

Secondly, this will give us one great reason, why Religion hath prospered no more in these late ages; don't lay all the fault upon Churchmen; these Unreasonable men have hindred the building of the Temple; if *St. Paul* preached to the beasts of *Ephesus*, there is no hope of perswading them to Reason, or Religion, nay when Christ himself preached to unreasonable men, he could not prevail.

Thirdly, let me exhort you, to that duty enjoined by the Text, that you would pray for the whole Church of Jesus, and all the faithful Ministers of it, in particular, for the Church and Orthodox Clergy of  
England

*England*, that we may be delivered from the plague and mischief of unreasonable men; And we beg this favour, not out of those low respects to our own ends and interest, as if we dreaded Martyrdom; We have already our Noble Army of Martyrs, and I doubt not, but that, if the honour of God, and Religion should call, there are vast numbers of us, that could with Resolution endure the flames, before we would ever worship the Beast, or his Image; St. *Paul* was not afraid of Bonds, or Imprisonment, nor of Death it self, though he prays to be secure from unreasonable men; but this he does out of respect to the Honour of Christ and his Religion, that the Gospel might be glorious in the world, *ver. 1.* And therefore I beseech you, in the words of St. *Paul* to the *Romans*, chap. 15. *ver. 30. Brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ his sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with us in your Prayers to God for us, that we may be delivered from, &c.* And that ye may do this, let me further plead with you, by these following considerations.

*First*, This is not onely an Arbitrary kindness, but it is your Duty, we challenge this as a just Debt you owe to us: For the Glory of God, and the Honour of Religion, is so much concerned in the success of the Churches Ministry, that all Christians are indispensably obliged to pray for the Ministers of Religion, that all Obstructions may be removed, and that our work may prosper in the building up of the Temple, or the Church of Christ; therefore, whenever you offer up your Prayers unto God, for your selves, and your Families, and forget the Household of God, and the Stewards and Ministers of it, ye have presented to God but an imperfect Sacrifice, and may doubt of an Acceptance.

C

*Secondly,*

*Secondly*, Do this upon the account of our Danger, for we are yet in *St. Paul's* case, surrounded with unreasonable men; on the one hand, the Pope curseth us from the tops of the Mountains; on the other side, we are scoff'd and mock'd at by every wild Gallant, and Atheist, we are in perils by our own Countrey-men, we have the Apostles Fate *βλασφημία*, we are Evil-spoken of; If we preach the Truth in Jesus, and maintain, that Eternal Life is the Free Gift of God, and that our best works have nothing to do in that Purchase, by way of Merit, then *Rome* brands us for Libertines; if to take off that abhorr'd Imputation, we teach the whole Design of Christianity, and with *St. Paul*, preach of Justice, and Temperance, and persuade men to live soberly, righteously, and godlily in this present world, then some unreasonable men will contemn us as but Moral Preachers; if we assert the Love of God towards Mankind, and extend his infinite Mercies beyond the narrow bounds of some mens Charity; if we believe that *St. Paul* was sober, when he tells us, *Heb. 2. 9.* that Christ *tasted Death for every man*; if we dare venture to be of *St. Johns* mind, who lay in the Bosom of our Saviour, and teach that for truth, which he writes in his first Epistle, the second Chapter, and second Verse, that Christ was *the propitiation for the sins of the whole World*, then we are blasphemed by the odious Name of *Arminians*. Now what service can we do to God in these Circumstances, being thus beset and opposed by unreasonable men? Would you have us to invent some New Gospel, to please the Fancies of wild and irrational men? No, we can speak nothing against the Truth; therefore there is nothing left to be done, but for us and you to joyn our hearty Prayers unto



- unto God, That he would deliver us from *unreasonable and wicked men*, and that the Word of God may have free course, and be glorified among us.

*Thirdly*, Pray thus, for none but God can deliver us from unreasonable men; the wisest Laws can't govern them, the soberest Councils cannot move them, the clearest Demonstrations cannot perswade them; None but he that set bounds to the Raging of the Sea, can secure us from unreasonable Men, or the Madness of the People.

But here I fear, there will be too just a Reason to complain of the Neglect of this part of Christian Piety and Devotion, we don't live in a Devout Age; The Wealth of the *Indies* is now more designed, than the Glories of an Eternal Kingdom; Trade is become the sole, or the grand Interest of *England*, and there are few concerned for the Affairs of Religion: I doubt the Merchants and Ships at Sea, have more Prayers and good Wishes, than all the Governours and Guides of the Church; But as for you, who profess yourselves of the Communion of the Church of *England*, I adjure you, by the Name of Jesus, your Lord and ours, by all that regard you have to the Glory of God, by all that Love and Duty you owe to your distressed Mother the Church, that you would for the time to come, vouchsafe us an hearty and daily mention in your Prayers; you know, the Churches united Prayers, once broke *St. Peters* Chains, and saved him from the Hands and Expectation of bloody and wicked men; and who knows, but that these weapons may still prevail, and that your Prayers may baffle the Plots and Designs of all your Enemies,



and we may yet be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men, and see Religion glorious.

And that I may not be accounted partial, I doe humbly bespeak all those of the Sacred Function, that they would stop the mouths of unreasonable men; If any thing will confute Perverseness, it must be a Christian and unspotted Life; and if once our Lives were as Holy as our Orders, if our Enemies could find no fault with us, but in the matter of our God; had they nothing to cavil at, but our Religion, and our Prayers; they would soon be ashamed of those unreasonable Objections; but if the Prophet be mad, the World will think, that the Beasts have more Reason than he, and may rebuke his Disorders.

Next I could wish, that all the People of these Nations would once become so far like God, and Christians, as to become Reasonable men, that they would learn to be humble, and modest, just and considering; there were then some hope to see happy dayes, to see Religion flourish; there would then be more Glory to God in the Highest, more Peace on Earth, and more Good Will one towards another. But if men will still continue perverse, mad, and unreasonable, we may speak of those things that make for Peace, but tis like Preaching to Hurricanes, or talking Moralls to a Tempest.

And as for those, who are dissenters from the Church of England, let me perswade them to suffer their reasons to awake; be but so just to us, as to allow us the common Equity of the world, not to condemn us before a sober examination; call nothing Popish, nor  
Anti-

Antichristian, untill you have made a strict enquiry whether those things deserve that charge, or not. Lay aside all prejudice, and blind prepossessions; and judge righteous judgment; for if you continue rash, and unreasonable, you may, for ought you know, mistake the true Prophets, and Servants of God, for the limbs of Antichrist, or the Priests of *Baal*; you may blaspheme truth it self, and believe the chaste spouse of Christ, to be an harlot; this will be an unpardonable injustice. The Church of *England* hath no Idolls, which it seeks to conceal under the skirts of its garments; it owns nothing but what it dare adventure to the strictest scrutiny; it is only want of enquiry, and sober examination, that men mistake us, and divide from our Communion.

Next, Let me exhort them to receive this reasonable counsel; believe all the Articles of the Christian faith, with the deepest impression, and stedfastness; observe all the precepts, and plain rules of holy and Christian life, with the utmost Devotion; in the fundamentalls of Religion, follow none but the conduct of that great Angel of the Covenant Christ Jesus; and then none of these things being contradicted, for the ordering of Circumstantials, be content to be led by *Moses* and *Aaron*; This was the good old way of Reason and Religion, and no man can run any hazard, that walks by this rule; And as for those men, who will not receive this safe counsel, I know not by what name to call them but unreasonable men.

Lastly, be exhorted to a sincere practice of the Christian Religion, for St. *Paul* complains in the last words of the Text, that all men have not faith, that is, that many of those, who called themselves Christians, were

were not devoutly so; their Faith was but a slight and unactive notion, and had no influence upon their lives, and this he reckons as no Faith; and this was the great cause, why they were unreasonable and wicked men. *St. Paul* gives us the character of those false Christians the *Gnosticks*; in the 2d Epistle of *St. Paul* to *Tim.* chap. 3. ver. 2. that they were lovers of themselves, Covetous, Boasters, Proud, Blasphemers, Rebellious, Bloody, Unfaithfull &c. and the reason of all this he gives us, ver. 5. because they had nothing but a form of Godliness. Religion sunk no deeper, than the Face, and Tongue, and so it was no wonder that they were still unreasonable, and wicked men; But were Religion settled in the souls of men, it would enlighten our judgments, and becalme our passions, make us more holy, and reasonable; Were men but seriously employed in conquering themselves, and subduing their own appetites, and in governing their lives by the laws of Jesus, they would have no time to trouble the world with embroyls and confusions,

To conclude, let us all live well, and constantly and devoutly pray in the words of this Apostolick, and primitive Litany; From unreasonable, and wicked men, Good Lord deliver us.

**F I N I S.**

